

Note-

237 rials which could well be made use of, such as skin, bone, and shell, are hardly used at all.

[189] Putnam claims that they are not used in his area, although he writes that sometimes the Pygmies wear horn charms borrowed or stolen from the villagers. Virtually no use other than magical is made of bone, horn, or shell, as far as one can tell from reports from any part of the Ituri. Among the archers there are few of the skin quivers and bow covers mentioned by Schebesta (1952, 124). Putnam (MS) further states that he has never known these Pygmies to skin game; they cook and eat the skin as well as the flesh.

237 Schebesta (1952, 124), however, writes that
411 hide quivers are plentiful, particularly in the western part of the forest, less so among the archers in the east, where arrows are always carried in a bundle held in the left hand. Schebesta (1952, 124) also mentions the wrist protector, made of monkey skin, used by

237 archers. He makes other reference to the use of
[291] skin as belts and for adornment and, occasion-
[301] ally, the use of the skin of a Colobus monkey to
[184] cover the back, but he does not specify to which Mbuti his remarks apply. We assume that, unless he specifies otherwise, he refers to the archers among whom he worked on his second trip.

[P. 165-B]

[ARCHERS]

There are different types of knives, some hafted, some unhafted, always worn in the belt by women and used for preparing food and for sharpening the pointed sticks used by them in both gathering activities and in cooking. Other items that might be found in or around an Efe archer hut include hunting equipment, such as a bow and quiver of arrows (Figs. 6-9), a dog bell (Fig. 7i), an ax for cutting small saplings and sometimes used in the search for honey, an ivory or wooden beater for barkcloth, clay pipe bowls (Fig. 5), hide slings for carrying children, and a few personal possessions such as hunting charms. Of exceptional interest, perhaps, is the basketry press (Fig. 11), used among the archers for extraction of juice from fruits.

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DRESS AND ORNAMENTATION

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Clothing consists mainly of barkcloth worn tucked between the legs. The upper part of the body is rarely covered, and then only by a skin cape worn over the shoulders by old men. Basketry caps are worn by men, and sometimes fur bands which may also be worn on the arm. Schebesta also mentions bracelets of shredded bark. Both men and women may wear, around the upper arm or wrist, fiber cords to which small pieces of wood, teeth, and other charms are attached. Leaves, flowers, nuts, and feathers

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[P.167-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 168-B]

[ARCHERS]

- 301 [CP.168-B)
are also used for adornment. Both men and women may wear combs in their hair. Sometimes the Mbuti make such combs themselves, more often they are borrowed or stolen from the villagers (Fig. 15a).

BODY DECORATION

- 304 Body mutilation is practiced occasionally in
177 imitation of the villagers. Schebesta mentions
302 as a peculiar "Bambuti" custom the plucking of
eyelashes, also the shaving of the head for es-
thetic effect. Men may tattoo their foreheads;
304 women, their faces, stomachs, and backs. Teeth
may be chipped, and sometimes women pierce
their nasal septa, lips, and earlobes. Cicatriza-
302 tion is very rare. All Mbuti, says Schebesta, like
to paint the body for esthetic effect as opposed
to the magical significance of facial painting.
1386 White, red, and black are the colors used, the
dyes being obtained from clay and certain

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200-0]

nkusa vine into cord, mainly used for net re-
pairing, are also everyday occupations. The
net hunters use vine much more widely than
the archers who use it for basketry rather than
cordage. Putnam also mentions the use of cer-
tain types of vine that give water. *Njelani* is a
long vine used for making children's swings and
the high swings used by young men mainly dur-
ing the honey season.

BODY DECORATION

Body decoration and mutilation as described
in the Putnam material is similar to that re-
counted by Schebesta, except that in the paint-
ing of designs on the body Anne Putnam men-
tions the use of *kangay*, a black dye obtained
from the juice of the gardenia fruit (Fig. 30a).
This is applied with a small twig. Use of red and
white is confined to ceremonial occasions. A va-
riety of hats and headdresses is used by the net
hunters, also bracelets, necklaces, combs, and
lip plugs. All of these may be made by the
Mbuti, though often in imitation of village ar-
tifacts (Fig. 30).

[NET HUNTERS]



FIG. 30. Personal adornment. a. *Kangay* (gardenia) seed, used by women for extraction of a black dye for painting the body, also for painting designs on barkcloth; net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. b. Hair decoration, *mongele* antelope hair; net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. c-d. Bracelets; Bira villagers, Central Ituri. e. Nose and/or lip plug, *bobu*; net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. f. Comb, *kisanoa*; Bira villagers, Central Ituri. g. Comb, *kisanoa*; net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. As everywhere among the Mbuti, metal objects are of villager origin. Many of the wooden objects of personal adornment are made in imitation of villager artifacts (compare f and g).

[P.200-c]

[NET HUNTERS]

INITIATION: *elima*

881 The first difference between Putnam's material and that of Schebesta regarding initiation [184] is that among the net hunters there is a form of initiation of girls known as *elima*. Schebesta [114] believes this to be a village custom (*elimo*), but no details are available for comparison. 881 Data on the Mbuti *elima* come mainly from Anne Putnam's notes on several such festivals that she witnessed among the Epulu net hunters. She was unable to get full information, but states that the *elima* (her spelling: *alima*) is held as girls come to the age of puberty—either individually or jointly. At such time the girl, [346] with some of her companions (unmarried girls and those whose breasts had begun to form), enters the *elima* house, a special hut built in the camp in the usual way but larger and with a partition down the middle. The *elima* hut is in the care of one of the old women in the camp, who is also in charge of the instruction of the menstruating girl.

• [301] The *elima* lasts about a month. During this [302] time the *elima* girls put on the vine circlets over their heads and under each shoulder (as worn by boy initiates) and paint their faces and bodies with white clay about twice a day, making designs on one another without, apparently, any particular convention. They go out of the camp together to collect vine and wood, also to collect roots and small pieces of wood that will make good ammunition. At [P. 216-87]

Mbuti

Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

ation camp. While some started erecting the hut, in the style of a bent-over windshield, others prepared a horizontal cross bar between two trees. Five boys were circumcised the first day, and three on separate days during the second week of the *nkumbi*. Not all were cut on the cross bar. Some were taken down to a stream. One was circumcised in the middle of the village; another, in a different place within the initiation camp. The cutting was done to the accompaniment of much drumming, while all the womenfolk of the village were shut up in their huts. No signal was given to indicate when a boy had been cut, though probably the change in the vigor of the drumming and *makata* beating served to notify the women. Only one boy was given a *sege* pipe to blow, by a particularly superstitious father. The "doctor" wore a mask made of a thin strip of bark (Fig. 48a) and raffia armbands (Fig. 47a) which were thereafter left hanging from the roof of the initiation hut.

After the circumcision, the wounds were dressed, and the boys immediately were made to begin to learn the initiation songs. Far from

[P 217-D]

(TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 218-B)

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[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 217A]

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FIG. 47. Initiation items, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Raffia armbands, worn by "doctor" during *nkhumbi* dances; at other times, hung from the roof of the initiation hut. b. Grass skirt, worn by initiates at final presentation dance.

PLATE 27 ²/_A

PYGMY PHYSICAL TYPES, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

- 288 a. An old Mbuti woman, probably around 60 years of age. She enjoys the respect and
 • 301 affection of her entire band. The pendant charm around her neck is of village origin, a gift
 199 from the Arabisé tribe of Ngwana cultivators. For them it is magic; for her it is purely decorative.
- 254 b. An Mbuti mother and child are close throughout life, but never more so than during
 the infancy of the child. Wrapped in a specially prepared piece of barkcloth, symbolic of
 the protection afforded the Mbuti by the forest, the infant is seldom out of its mother's
 arms. When it is, however, any woman or older girl may take the mother's place, holding,
 fondling, and even nursing the child.

1/Plate 27 appears on page 287--Analyst/

[P 286]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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/Plate 27-A/

/Caption appears on p.286/
[P.287-A]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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[P299]

/Plate 33/
/caption appears on p. 209/

GOVERNMENT: INTERNAL

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29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an administrator there who took her photograph. Masisi demanded the money, and the girl said she did not ask for any. Masisi's wife said the girl was a fool, that she could have got fifty francs. In fact, she was a thief because she deprived everyone of cigarettes. The girl was still standing up where she arrived in camp, and Masisi's wife went up and forced her to sit down, and thrust her private parts into the girl's face as a gesture of contempt. The girl's parents said nothing.

30. A man burped loudly during the evening meal, and brought forth insults from all sides that would have developed into a fight had Moké not taken the *banja* sticks and started beating them, a sign for the *molimo* singing to begin.

31. A girl, decorated with leaves stuck in her bark cloth, was dancing vigorously and some of the leaves kept falling out. She blamed the younger children and started beating them until they fled, crying. Nobody interfered.

32. Amabosu, for no known reason, refused to allow his wife to move the fire from their hearth when changing camp. She went to her brother's hut and sat there sulking for nearly a whole day. Amabosu, fed by his mother, paid no attention.

33. Occasionally, however, even the most trivial origins can lead to a serious and lasting rift. Such a dispute, described more fully in *The Forest People* (Chapter 6), involved two brothers, Aberi and Masalito. It started when Masalito went to visit his brother on a rainy day. Masalito was in the main camp, Aberi in Cephu's camp. Aberi was asleep, and his wife insulted Masalito twice, first by refusing to smoke the same pipe, second by offering him an old and dirty pipe-stem to take back to the main camp with him. This led to a fight between the two brothers which was temporarily healed by the force of ridicule levelled against Aberi, and further subdued by the action of the *molimo* in beating Masalito's hut as a sign of the displeasure of the forest.

However, the bad feeling remained, if hidden, until Aberi's death.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THEFT

Theft, apart from the kind practiced by Pepci, was unknown except in the village context. Sometimes when Pepci was caught he was thrashed; on the other hand, sometimes he was tolerantly laughed at and allowed to go his way. There was once, however, a curious case that was never settled.

[P.276-E]



31. Cephu's wife, carrying an ember of the family hearth wrapped in fire-resistant leaves, and with her carrying basket on her back, sets off after the hunt. She will act as a beater with the other women and children, and will gather wild foods on the way.

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[P 276-K]

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39. The musical bow, apart from the wooden clappers used during the molimo and during the honey season, is the only musical instrument that seems to be original to the Mbuti. Even this is slightly used, the one here simply being a hunting bow tapped by an arrow, the mouth acting as the resonator. An extremely musical people, the Mbuti are, unlike the villagers, vocal rather than instrumental.



40. Belchimito, the old lady who "died well," and for whom the exceptionally long molimo festival was held. The charms around her neck, stolen from the villagers, would have been regarded by the Achikind Nguema as powerful magic. For her it was a mere ornament.

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3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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Asofalinda's eldest daughter being painted with
kangay juice for a wedding.

[P 72-H]

MOLIMO: THE DANCE OF DEATH

an empty basket at him and said, "There, you make so much noise, 765
go and fill it yourself." Even before the hunt went off there were 152
two full baskets hanging up, and by evening there were four.

The change between the atmosphere of the morning and that of
the evening was unbelievable. Usually when a day starts off in such
ill humor it continues in that way to the bitter end. But the hunt
seemed to restore everyone's good spirits, even though it was not
outstandingly successful. I did not go on the hunt, but stayed in
camp. And all day long the girls were singing in Kondabate's house,
and the old woman was with them.

After we had eaten the evening meal Manyalibo went around the 765
camp himself and took a piece of wood from the fire outside each 533
hut, placing them all on the molimo fire. Then, before it was com- [372]
pletely dark, the men gathered to sing. Even Cephu was there, and
the singing was light and cheerful. The girls that had been in Konda-
bate's hut came out as soon as we started. They had painted their [302]
bodies with black kangay juice, and in their hair they had twined [301] •
circlets of vine, one strand of which stuck way out in front, over
their foreheads, with a small bunch of feathers dangling from the end.
They kept together in a tight little group, their bodies swaying in 765
unison to the songs of the men. Then they began to dance, still so 535
close together that I could not see between them. They danced all
around the group, forcing us closer and closer to the fire. In a snak-
ing, graceful line they seemed to take charge of the music, increasing
the tempo until the men were as exhausted as they were, and we all
stopped for a rest.

By then it was dark, and I expected the girls and the rest of the 765
women and children to retire to their huts. But they had built a fire 562
of their own at the edge of the molimo group, and there they all
sat, chatting inconsequentially as though they did this every night.
It was then that I first noticed the old woman. Under a great head- [142]
dress of vine and feathers her hatchet face looked more angular than [292]

THE FOREST PEOPLE

222 camp resounded to songs of joy and praise, accompanied by the ring-
527 ing of the ngbengbe sticks as they were clapped together in complex
617 cross rhythms by boys and girls alike. Every night Masisi told his
[563] group, which had steadily grown ever since the beginning, stories
about the past. And every night we went to bed content, knowing
[826] that the morrow would be even better; for each day we discovered
fresh growths of mushrooms, trees full of different kinds of nuts,
and each night the chameleon gave its long, sad cry, to tell us that
on the morrow we would have more honey.

222 One night in particular will always live for me, because that night
535 I think I learned just how far away we civilized human beings have
517 drifted from reality. The moon was full, so the dancing had gone
on for longer than usual. Just before going to sleep I was standing
outside my hut when I heard a curious noise from the nearby chil-
dren's bopi. This surprised me, because at nighttime the Pygmies
generally never set foot outside the main camp. I wandered over to
see what it was.

- [301] There, in the tiny clearing, splashed with silver, was the sophisti-
cated Kenge, clad in bark cloth, adorned with leaves, with a flower
stuck in his hair. He was all alone, dancing around and singing
softly to himself as he gazed up at the treetops.

Now Kenge was the biggest flirt for miles, so, after watching a
while, I came into the clearing and asked, jekingly, why he was danc-
ing alone. He stopped, turned slowly around and looked at me as
though I was the biggest fool he had ever seen; and he was plainly
surprised by my stupidity.

[778] "But I'm not dancing alone," he said. "I am dancing with the
[821] forest, dancing with the moon." Then, with the utmost unconcern,
he ignored me and continued his dance of love and life.

621 As the weeks went by, however, a note of dissatisfaction stirred
578 in the camp. Masisi began to complain that the others, including
602 Manyalibo, were way off to the north getting meat, yet they had
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